

leaders did not think it advisable to abandon the position on that question, even in the campaigns when for an orator to announce that he would discuss the tariff question meant the departure of his audience. The party has met defeat on the trust question and on the question of imperialism, and yet does that fact suggest to intelligent democrats that they should abandon their position on those great issues?

If the reorganizers are fighting for recruits, they hope to obtain them from the ranks of the financiers and the trust magnates. Those who insist that the democratic party shall not be re-publicanized hope to obtain recruits from among the people who ask no favors at the hands of government, but will be content with simple justice.

Philippine Independence.

The Philippine Independence committee, of which Mr. E. W. Ordway, 150 Nassau street, New York city, is secretary, is sending out a petition, a copy of which is here given:

"We, the undersigned, members of all political parties, join with the above-named committee in urging upon the approaching national conventions the adoption of resolutions pledging to the people of the Philippine islands their ultimate national independence upon terms similar to those offered to Cuba.

The petition will be laid before the various national conventions and they will be asked to adopt resolutions "pledging to the people of the Philippine islands their ultimate national independence upon terms similar to those offered to Cuba." Readers of *The Commoner* who are in sympathy with the movement, as all should be, are asked to cut out and sign the petition and mail to Mr. Ordway. There is no doubt that the democratic convention will adopt such resolutions, for they are exactly the same in substance as the platform adopted in 1900. If the republican convention would only adopt a similar plank, the Philippine question could be taken out of politics, but there is no likelihood of the adoption of such a resolution by a republican convention. However, the presentation of a large petition would greatly assist by showing public sentiment. In sending the petition it might be well for each one to state his politics, in order that public sentiment on the subject may be the better gauged.

A Narrow Escape.

A correspondent for the New York Tribune called upon Judge Parker April 24 and sought to obtain some statement from this presidential candidate concerning his views upon public questions. The Tribune correspondent reports Judge Parker as saying:

"I can't for the life of me understand why all these newspapers keep sending their representatives after me continually when they know I will have nothing to say to any of them upon any of these public questions. Personally, I want to treat them all courteously and in a friendly way, but they want something more which I cannot give. A reporter of a well known New York paper camped on my place nearly all day recently, and most every day for a time, and, of course, got nothing. But I was badly caught by a well known woman reporter the other day. She was waiting for me without my knowledge and I walked right in the hall where she was. I was a bit afraid of her, too, knowing her methods, fearing what she might say. But, of course, she got nothing of importance and I find no reason to complain of her report."

Judge Parker seems to be in the dark on a question wherein he could be enlightened immediately by any sixteen-year-old schoolboy.

A child in his teens could tell Judge Parker that when a man is presented as a candidate for the presidential nomination at the hands of a great political party, the members of that party, as well as the people generally, are anxious to know the position he takes upon great public questions.

It is not a matter of mere curiosity, although in Judge Parker's case it may be said to be rapidly approaching that stage. But the members of a party having fixed principles have the right to know the opinion entertained by a man who aspires to the highest honor within their party's gift. It is the boast of Mr. Parker's friends that it has been his fixed policy to remain silent on public questions ever since he mounted the bench and since he was suggested as a presidential candidate he has persistently refused to make his position known.

It is strange to hear a candidate for the pres-

idency say that he "cannot" give his opinions upon "any of these public questions;" and a touch of humor is added to this particular situation when this presidential candidate describes his narrow escape from being "badly caught by a well-known woman reporter the other day." According to this presidential candidate's statement, this woman reporter was waiting for him and he "walked right in the hall where she was." He declares that he was "a bit afraid of her, too, knowing her methods;" but, as Judge Parker explains, "This woman reporter got nothing of importance," and so Judge Parker was happy.

It was, indeed, a narrow escape. It is safe to say that never, in the history of politics was there another instance where a man being formally and persistently offered for the presidential nomination at the hands of a great party, bent his energies, as Judge Parker has done, in the effort to avoid taking the public into his confidence and permitting the members of the party to which he is presumed to belong to learn his opinion upon the great questions of the day.

Under these circumstances, is it any wonder, then, that the Parker boom, in spite of all the bluff and bluster that has been made in its behalf seems incapable of real progress? Is it any wonder, then, that democrats who have faith in their principles and hope for their party decline to grow enthusiastic over the candidacy of a man who seems to imagine that the test of an available candidate for the presidency is in his ability to keep the people in doubt as to his position on public questions and who acknowledges himself unable to understand why his opinions with respect to public questions are sought for by newspaper men?

A Simple Agency.

The Chicago Tribune, a republican newspaper, says: "Nearly all the American manufacturers of axes, hatchets, and edge tools, have been persuaded to pool their issues and carry on a brief campaign. Since the first of the year there has been an advance of 25 per cent in the price of axes and hatchets, and of 30 to 40 per cent in that of edge tools. There are to be large advances on July 1 and October 1. There is need of some agency which shall have power to intervene effectively as soon as it is discovered that a combine of manufacturers has begun its cornering operations."

There is upon the United States statute books a law providing for the fine and imprisonment of men who conspire against the people. The republican administration refuses to enforce the law; and yet, after describing one of these lawless concerns, a republican newspaper says: "There is need of some agency which shall have power to intervene effectively as soon as it is discovered that a combine of manufacturers has begun its cornering operations!"

Long ago "cornering operations" were begun on many products very important to the people. Long ago absolute and merciless monopoly was obtained upon many of the people's necessities; and yet all this time the criminal clause of the Sherman law remains unenforced upon the statute books. Republican papers admit that something desperate must be done; yet they are not willing to insist that the republican administration shall adopt the very simple process of enforcing a plain law.

"Mere Pawns."

Referring to the Reed code of rules, the New York Tribune, a republican paper, says:

"Under the code the house has become a mere registering machine. It offers no real arena for debate or leadership. Whether the legislative efficiency of the lower branch has deteriorated since these rules came into force may be disputed. But the political importance of the body has greatly shrunk, and members have come to look on themselves as mere pawns in a game in which they have neither a hand nor a voice. The rest of the world has been quick to take the house of recent years at its own valuation. But its unused powers remain. They can be called into play again, and the house can be restored to its old status as a political body whenever its members insist on reasserting their suspended rights.

Is it not true that the republican party has very generally become "a mere registering machine"? Of course, "the unused powers of the house can be called into play again and the house can be restored to its old status as a political body whenever its members insist on reasserting their suspended rights;" but the Reed code is not, primarily, responsible for this situation. Republican members of congress will never be able to assert

their rights and the republican house will never be able to act as a deliberative body in which public interests are protected and public measures are thoroughly discussed from the people's standpoint so long as the mortgage which the republican party has given to the representatives of special interests remains in full force and effect.

The Tribune must not forget, however, that the republican members of the house are not the only "mere pawns in the game in which they have neither a hand nor a voice." The republican senate is practically in the same condition and the executive branch of the administration, under republican authority, is not much more than "a mere pawn."

Whether it be in the executive department, in the senate or in the house, so long as the party in authority is dominated by special interests, the representatives of the party in power cannot, with due regard for their political fortunes, assert their manhood. They are "mere pawns," and while some of them may seem to speak very bravely in defense of public interests, they dare not act in a way that will bring substantial relief to the people.

Wonderfully Candid.

The Kansas City Journal, a republican newspaper, says: "Let Mr. Bryan not tire in his good work of berating the republican party, its leaders and its policies. Let him continue calling them the tools of plutocracy, the hirelings of the trusts, the violators of the constitution and the oppressors of the masses. The republican party doesn't mind this kind of treatment at all. It grows fat on it, as was shown in 1896 and 1900. There is nothing Mr. Bryan can say or do that will harm the republican party as long as he stands firmly on the Kansas City platform and will have no other. If he should show signs of wavering—if he should quit fighting Cleveland, Parker and reorganization and encourage his following to seek harmony—then the republican party would begin to feel alarmed. But happily Mr. Bryan is too set in his principles and prejudices to justify any fears on that score. The g. o. p. is sure of its Bryan, and also of its victory."

Of course, the republicans are desperately afraid that the reorganizers will get into power; of course the republican party would "begin to feel alarmed" if the democratic party should return to the Cleveland rut; and of course republican papers are so thoroughly frank and candid that they admit the thing of which they stand in greatest dread.

Special Offer.

Those who desire to assist in the effort to increase *The Commoner's* circulation and thereby widen its sphere of influence will find a convenient way through the special subscription offer now being made. According to the terms of this offer, cards, each good for one year's subscription to *The Commoner*, will be furnished in lots of five at the rate of \$3 per lot. This places the yearly subscription rate at 60 cents.

Any one ordering the cards may sell them for \$1 each, thus earning a commission of \$2 on each lot sold, or he may sell them at the cost price and find compensation in the fact that he has contributed to the effort to widen *The Commoner's* sphere of influence.

These cards may be paid for when ordered or they may be ordered and remittance made after they have been sold.

A coupon is printed below for the convenience of those who are willing to assist in the coming contest.

THE COMMONER'S SPECIAL OFFER

Application for Subscription Cards

5	Publisher Commoner: I am interested in increasing <i>The Commoner's</i> circulation, and desire you to send me a supply of subscription cards. I agree to use my utmost endeavor to sell the cards, and will remit for them at the rate of 60 cents each, when sold.
10	
15	
20	
25	
50	
75	Name _____
100	Box, or Street No. _____
	P. O. _____ State _____
	Indicate the number of cards wanted by marking X opposite one of the numbers printed on end of this blank

If you believe the paper is doing a work that merits encouragement, fill out the above coupon and mail it to *The Commoner*, Lincoln, Neb.